Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for making a negative-working lithographic master for wet offset lithographic printing of an image on a printing medium, comprising the steps of:
   (a) coating a layer of positive-working radiation-imageable medium onto a hydrophilic lithographic base;
   (b) forming a mask on ~~the~~ a surface of said radiation-imageable medium without substantially chemically altering said radiation-imageable medium, said mask being in the form of said image to create masked areas and unmasked areas and said mask substantially resistant to a developer; and
   (c) without allowing said radiation-imageable medium to become substantially exposed by ultraviolet radiation, exposing said layer of radiation-imageable medium to said developer to remove ~~the areas of said radiation-imageable medium that are not covered by said mask~~ said radiation-imageable medium from said unmasked areas and to uncover said hydrophilic lithographic base in said unmasked areas.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method for making a negative-working lithographic master for wet offset lithographic printing of an image on a printing medium, comprising the steps of:
   (a) providing a lithographic precursor comprising a layer of positive-working radiation-imageable medium coated on a hydrophilic lithographic base;

(b) forming a mask on ~~the~~ a surface of said radiation-imageable medium without substantially chemically altering said radiation-imageable medium, said mask being in the form of said image to create masked and unmasked areas and said mask substantially resistant to a developer; and

(c) without allowing said radiation-imageable medium to become substantially exposed by ultraviolet radiation, exposing said layer of radiation-imageable medium to said developer to remove ~~the areas of said medium that are not covered by said mask~~ said radiation-imageable medium from said unmasked areas and to uncover said hydrophilic lithographic base in said unmasked areas.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for making a negative-working lithographic master from a positive-working radiation-imageable medium, comprising the ~~step~~ steps of: imagewise depositing droplets of a masking fluid onto a layer of positive-working radiation-imageable medium on a hydrophilic lithographic base without substantially chemically altering said radiation-imageable medium; and without allowing said radiation-imageable medium to become substantially exposed by ultraviolet radiation, removing said radiation-imageable medium to uncover said hydrophilic base in regions where said masking fluid has not been applied by exposure of said radiation imageable medium to one or more developing chemicals.

5. (Withdrawn) A method of performing wet offset printing of an image on a printing medium, comprising the steps of: (a) providing an offset lithographic precursor comprising a layer of positive-working radiation-imageable medium on a hydrophilic lithographic base; (b) forming a mask upon the surface of said radiation-imageable medium, said mask being in the form of said image and substantially resistant to a developer; (c) forming a lithographic master by exposing said layer of radiation-imageable medium to said developer to remove the areas of said developer that are not covered by said mask; and (d) performing wet offset lithographic printing with said lithographic master.

6. (Withdrawn) A method for wet offset printing, said method comprising the steps of: (a) making a negative-working lithographic master from a positive-working radiation-imageable medium; and (b) performing wet offset lithographic printing with said lithographic master.

7. (Original) A negative-working lithographic master produced in accordance with the method of claim 1.

8. (Currently Amended) A ~~lithographic master in accordance with~~ method according to claim ~~6~~ 1 wherein said hydrophilic lithographic base ~~is~~ comprises one of:
   (a) a disposable plate;
   (b) a re-usuable plate;
   (c) a printing cylinder of a printing press; and
   (d) a seamless sleeve for a printing cylinder of a printing press.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) A masked lithographic printing precursor for use in ~~the~~ wet offset printing of an image, the printing precursor comprising:
   (a) a hydrophilic lithographic base;
   (b) a layer of positive-working radiation-imageable medium coated on said base; and
   (c) a mask formed upon the surface of said layer of radiation-imageable medium without substantially chemically altering said radiation-imageable medium, said mask being in the form of said image to create masked areas and unmasked areas and said mask substantially resistant to a developer;

   wherein said printing precursor is developable, without allowing said radiation-imageable medium to become substantially exposed by ultraviolet radiation, to remove said

radiation-imageable material from said unmasked areas and to uncover said hydrophilic lithographic base in said unmasked areas.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said step of forming a mask comprises depositing droplets of a masking fluid.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said depositing is done by means of an inkjet printer.

13. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said step of forming a mask includes the steps of curing said mask.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 13 wherein said curing is done by heating.

15. (Original) A method according to claim 14 wherein said heating is done at a temperature in the range of 40 - 130E C for a time in the range of 10 seconds to 3 minutes.

16. (Original) A method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of hardening the part of said layer of medium that remains on said base.

17. (Original) A method according to claim 1 further comprising, after step (c), the step of removing said mask.

18. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said masking fluid comprises an indicator dye.

19. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said masking fluid comprises an active masking ingredient and a solvent.

20. (Original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said solvent comprises water.

21. (Original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said solvent comprises an organic solvent.

22. (Original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said solvent comprises water and an organic solvent.

23. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~9~~ 19 wherein said masking fluid comprises a nitrogen-containing compound wherein at least one nitrogen atom is:
(a) quarternized; or
(b) incorporated in a heterocyclic ring; or
(c) both quarternized and incorporated in a heterocyclic ring.

24. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 23 wherein said nitrogen-containing compound is one of ~~sub-paragraph~~:
(a) a triaryl methane dye, and
(b) a tetraalkyl ammonium compound.

25. (Original) A method according to claim 23 wherein said nitrogen-containing compound is one of:
(a) a quinoline;
(b) a triazole;
(c) an imidazole; and
(d) an indole.

26. (Original) A method according to claim 25 wherein said nitrogen-containing compound is 1,2,4-triazole.

27. (Original) A method according to claim 24 wherien said nitrogen-containing compound is one of:

(a) Crystal Violet;

(b) Ethel Violet; and

(c) Basic Blue 7.

28. (Original) A method according to claim 24 wherein said nitrogen-containing compound is one of:

(a) cetrimide; and

(b) a benzotrimethyl ammonium salt.

29. (Original) A method according to claim 23 wherein said nitrogen-containing compound is a quinolinium compound.

30. (Original) A method according to claim 29 wherein said quinolinium compound is one of:

(a) 1-ethyl-2-methyl quinolinium iodide; and

(b) 1-ethyl-4-methyl quinolinium iodide.

31. (Original) A method according to claim 23 wherein said nitrogen-containing compound is a benzothiazolylidene compound.

32. (Original) A method according to claim 31 wherein said benzothiazolyidene compound is 3-ethyl-2-methyl benzothiazolium iodide.

33. (Original) A method according to claim 23 wherein said nitrogen-containing compound is a pyridinium compound.

34. (Original) A method according to claim 33 wherein said pyridinium compound is one of:

(a) cetyl pyridinium bromide;

(b) ethyl viologen dibromide; and

(c) fluoropyridinium tetrafluoroborate.

35. (Original) A method according to claim 29 wherein said quinolinium compound is a cationic cyanine dye.

36. (Original) A method according to claim 35 wherein said dye is one of:

(a) Dye A; and

(b) Quinoldine Blue.

37. (Original) A method according to claim 31 wherein said benzothiazolium compound is 3-ethyl-2-[3-ethyl-2(3H)-benzothiazoylidene)-2-methyl-1-propenyl] benzothiazolium iodide.

38. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said masking fluid comprises one of:

(a) a flavone;

(b) a flavonone;

(c) an isoflavanone;

(d) a coumarin;

(e) a chromone;

(f) an indeneone;

(g) a chalcone;

(h) a xanthone;

(i) a thioxanthone;

(j) benzophenone;

(k) a phthalimide; and

(l) a phenanthrenequinone.

39. (Original) A method according to claim 38 wherein said flavone is one of:
    (a) 7,8-benzoflavone;
    (b) trihydroxyflavone; and
    (c) naphthaflavone.

40. (Original) A method according to claim 38 wherein said flavanone is hydroxy-dimethoxyflavanone.

41. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said masking fluid comprises a poly substituted siloxane.

42. (Original) A method according to claim 41 wherein said siloxane is polyphenylsiloxane.

43. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said masking fluid comprises a substituted pyran.

44. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said making fluid comprises a perfluorinated compound.

45. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said masking fluid comprises acridine orange base.

46. (Original) A method according to claim 19 wherein the amount of said active masking ingredient is in the range of 0.5 - 5 weight % of said masking fluid.

47. (Original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said masking fluid further comprises one or more of:
    (a) a humidifying co-solvent;
    (b) a dye;

(c) a surfactant or wetting agent; and

(d) a biocide.

48. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said radiation-imageable medium is a quinonediazide.

49. (Original) A method according to claim 48 wherein said quinonediazide is a 1,2-naphthoquinone-2-diazide-4- or -5- sulfonyl derivative.

50. (Original) A method according to claim 48 wherein said quinonediazide is a naphthoquinonediazide.

51. (Original) A method according to claim 50 wherein the amount of said naphthoquinonediazide is in the range of 3 - 50 weight % relative to the weight of non-volatile components of said radiation-imageable medium.

52. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said radiation-imageable medium comprises a binder.

53. (Original) A method according to claim 52 wherein said binder is a novolak polycondensate.

54. (Original) A method according to claim 52 wherein said binder is a polyhydroxyphenyl resin.

55. (Original) A method according to claim 52 wherein said binder is a polymer or co-polymer of an acrylic or methacrylic acid ester with a polyhydricphenol.

56. (Original) A method according to claim 52 wherein the amount of said binder is in the range of 30 - 90 % by weight relative to total solids in said medium.

57. (Original) A method according to claim 52 wherein the amount of said binder is in the range of 50 - 85 % by weight relative to total solids in said medium.

58. (Original) A method according to claim 52 wherein said binder has pheonolic hydroxyl groups present in the range of about 1 - 15 mmol/g and a molecular weight up to 100,000.

59. (Original) A method according to claim 52 wherein said binder comprises a combination of a cresol/formaldehyde novolak and an unplasticized, alkyl-etherified melamine/formaldehyde resin.

60. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said radiation-imageable medium comprises or more of:

(a) a polyglycol;
(b) a cellulose derivative;
(c) a dye;
(d) an adhesion promoter;
(e) a pigment; and
(f) a UV-absorber.

61. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said step of coating comprises dissolving said radiation-imageable medium in a solvent and applying it by one of:

(a) spraying;
(b) dipping;
(c) roller application;
(d) slot dies;
(e) blade application; and

(f) coater application.

62. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said lithographic base is anodized aluminum.

63. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said developer is an aqueous alkaline solution.

64. (Original) A method according to claim 63 wherein said solution has a pH in the range of 10-14.

65. (Original) A method according to claim 63 wherein said solution further includes one or more of:

(a) an organic solvent;

(b) a surfactant; and

(c) a sequestering agent.

66. (Cancelled)

67. (Cancelled)

68. (Cancelled)

69. (Withdrawn) A masking fluid for forming a mask on the surface of a layer of positive-working radiation-imageable medium, comprising: (a) an active masking ingredient that is substantially resistant to a developer; and (b) a solvent capable of dissolving said active masking ingredient and of not substantially removing said positive-working radiation-imageable medium from a hydrophilic lithographic base.